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Report of the Disarmament Commission

General Assembly

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Contents

Chapter		*Paragraphs*	*Page*
I.	Introduction	1–2	1
II.	Organization and work of the 2000 substantive session	3–12	1
III.	Documentation	13–25	2
	A. Documents submitted by the Secretary-General	13	2
	B. Other documents, including documents submitted by Member States	14–25	3
IV.	Conclusions and recommendations	26–29	3
Annex			
	Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament: paper presented by the Chairman		6

The 2000 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission was delayed from April, as originally planned, and was held from 26 June to 7 July. The present final report of the Commission to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly was compiled on 7 July upon completion of the session.

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/56 A of 1 December 1999, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission".

2. The Disarmament Commission met at Headquarters and held three meetings, on 2 December 1999 (A/CN.10/PV.232), 15 February (A/CN.10/PV.233) and 26 June 2000 (A/CN.10/PV.234) for its organizational session. During that session, the Commission considered questions related to the organization of work and substantive agenda items for its 2000 substantive session in accordance with the "Ways and means to enhance the functioning of the Disarmament Commission" (A/CN.10/137) and in the light of General Assembly resolution 54/56A. The Commission took up the question of the election of its officers, taking into account the principle of rotation of the chairmanship among the geographic regions. The Commission considered the provisional agenda for the 2000 substantive session and decided to establish a committee of the whole and two working groups to deal with two substantive items on the agenda. The Commission further decided that its next substantive session would be held from 26 June to 7 July 2000.

II. Organization and work of the 2000 substantive session

3. The Disarmament Commission met at Headquarters from 26 June to 7 July 2000. In the course of its session, the Commission held five plenary meetings (see A/CN.10/PV.235-239) under the chairmanship of Javad Zarif, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Timur Alasaniya, Political Affairs Officer of the Disarmament and Decolonization Organs Servicing Branch, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, served as Acting Secretary of the Commission.

4. During the 2000 session, the Bureau of the Commission was constituted as follows:

Chairman:

Javad Zarif, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Vice-Chairmen:

Representatives of the following States: Armenia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Monaco, Sierra Leone and Venezuela

Rapporteur:

Samuel Omehou (Benin)

5. At its 235th plenary meeting, on 26 June 2000, the Commission adopted the following provisional agenda (A/CN.10/L.46):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organization of work.
4. Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament.
5. Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms.

6. Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

7. Other business.

6. At the same meeting, the Commission approved its general programme of work for the session (A/CN.10/2000/CRP.1) and decided to allocate four meetings to a general exchange of views.

7. On 26 and 27 June, the Disarmament Commission held a general exchange of views on all agenda items (A/CN.10/PV.235-238). The representatives of the following countries made statements during the general exchange of views: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal (on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries), Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Ukraine, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

8. At its first meeting, on 26 June, the Commission had heard the statement of the Under-Secretary for Disarmament Affairs, Jayantha Dhanapala.

9. In accordance with the decisions taken at its organizational session, the Disarmament Commission entrusted Working Group I with the mandate of dealing with agenda item 4, "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament". Working Group I met under the chairmanship of Yaw Odei Osei (Ghana) and held five meetings between 28 June and 6 July.

10. The Commission entrusted Working Group II with the mandate of dealing with agenda item 5, "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms". Working Group II met under the chairmanship of Gabriela Martinic (Argentina) and held six meetings between 28 June and 6 July.

11. At its 239th plenary meeting, on 7 July, the Disarmament Commission considered the reports of Working Groups I and II on agenda items 4 and 5, respectively. The reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein are included in section IV of the present report.

12. In accordance with the past practice of the Disarmament Commission, some non-governmental organizations attended the plenary meetings.

III. Documentation

A. Documents submitted by the Secretary-General

13. Pursuant to paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 54/56 A, the Secretary-General, by a note dated 8 February 2000, transmitted to the Disarmament Commission the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament,[1] together with all the official records of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly relating to disarmament matters (A/CN.10/199).

B. Other documents, including documents submitted by Member States

14. In the course of the Commission's work, the documents listed below, dealing with substantive questions, were submitted.

15. A Chairman's paper, entitled "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament", was submitted to Working Group I (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.1).

16. A working paper, entitled "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament", was submitted by China (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.2).

17. A working paper, entitled "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament", was submitted by France on behalf of the European Union, as well as Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.3).

18. A working paper, entitled "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament", was submitted by the United States of America (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.4).

19. A working paper, entitled "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament", was submitted by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.5).

20. A working paper, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms", was submitted by China (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.2).

21. A working paper, entitled "Destruction of surplus, confiscated or collected weapons as a practical confidence-building measure in the field of conventional arms", was submitted by South Africa (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.3).

22. A working paper entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms" was submitted by Switzerland (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.4).

23. A working paper entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms: current efforts reappraised" was submitted by Japan (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.5).

24. Two working papers, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons" (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.6) and "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms" (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.7) were submitted by Portugal and France on behalf of the European Union and associated countries.

25. A number of conference room papers were submitted by various delegations on both substantive items.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

26. At its 239th plenary meeting, on 7 July, the Disarmament Commission adopted by consensus the reports of its subsidiary bodies and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein regarding agenda items 4 and 5. The Commission agreed to submit the texts of those reports, reproduced below, to the General Assembly.

27. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted, as a whole, its report to be presented to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session.

28. The text of the report of Working Group I follows.

Report of Working Group I on agenda item 4

1. The Disarmament Commission, at its organizational session, on 2 December 1999, and at the resumed sessions on 15 February and 26 June 2000, decided to establish Working Group I on agenda item 4, entitled "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament", pursuant to General Assembly resolution 54/56 A of 1 December 1999.

2. In connection with its work, Working Group I had before it the following documents:

(a) Working paper submitted by the Chairman of the Working Group on 5 July 2000 (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.1);

(b) Working paper submitted by China (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.2);

(c) Working paper submitted by France on behalf of the European Union (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.3);

(d) Working paper submitted by the United States of America (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.4);

(e) Working paper submitted by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.5).

3. The Working Group met under the chairmanship of Yaw Odei Osei (Ghana) and held five meetings between 28 June and 6 July 2000. The Chairman also conducted a number of informal consultations. Timur Alasaniya and Tatyana Shestakova of the Disarmament and Decolonization Organs Servicing Branch, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, served as Secretary and Deputy Secretary, respectively, of the Working Group. Mika Murakami of the Department for Disarmament Affairs served as an adviser to the Working Group.

4. At the suggestion of the Chairman, the Working Group devoted two meetings to general discussions, during which general comments, concrete ideas and proposals were presented by delegations.

5. At the third meeting of the Working Group, on 3 July, the Chairman submitted his working paper, entitled "Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament" (A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.1), which took into consideration written and oral submissions, and which was commented on by delegations. The Chairman's paper is his sole responsibility and does not represent a negotiated position nor command any consensus whatsoever.

6. At the 4th meeting of the Working Group, on 5 July, preliminary discussions took place on specific elements contained in the Chairman's paper and a number of written and oral proposals were made by delegations.

7. At its 5th meeting, on 6 July, the Working Group considered and adopted by consensus its report on agenda item 4. It also decided to annex to the report

the Chairman's paper contained in document A/CN.10/2000/WG.I/WP.1, without prejudice to the position of any delegation.

29 The text of the report of Working Group II follows.

Report of Working Group II on agenda item 5

1. At its 235th meeting, on 26 June 2000, the Disarmament Commission adopted its agenda for the 2000 substantive session (A/CN.10/L.46). It also decided to allocate to Working Group II agenda item 5, entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms".

2. The Working Group, under the chairmanship of Gabriela Martinic (Argentina), held 6 meetings, from 28 June to 6 July 2000. The Chairperson also conducted informal consultations with various delegations. Saijin Zhang and Sergei Cherniavsky of the Disarmament and Decolonization Organs Servicing Branch, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services of the Secretariat, served as Secretary and Deputy Secretary, respectively, of the Working Group, and Nazir Kamal of the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat served as an adviser to the Working Group.

3. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 28 and 29 June, the Working Group had a general exchange of views on the subject. At subsequent meetings, general comments, concrete ideas and working papers, submitted by China (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.2), South Africa (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.3), Switzerland (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.4), Japan (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.5) and France on behalf of the European Union and associated countries (A/CN.10/2000/WG.II/WP.6 and 7) were presented.

4. At its meeting on 6 July, the Working Group considered and adopted by consensus its report on the item entitled "Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms".

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 27* (A/54/27).

Annex

Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament: paper presented by the Chairman

1. Introduction: general overview
2. Interrelationship between nuclear disarmament and international peace and security:
   (a) Changing political environment of the last decade;
   (b) Present political setting and its implications for nuclear disarmament.
3. Review of achievements, current developments and emerging initiatives:
   (a) Multilateral;
   (b) Bilateral;
   (c) Unilateral.
4. Existing mechanisms dealing with nuclear disarmament:
   (a) Within the United Nations system;
   (b) Outside the United Nations system.
5. Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament:
   (a) Conceptual approaches;
   (b) Practical steps.
6. Conclusions and recommendations

1. Introduction: general overview

Discussion on the importance of nuclear disarmament in the current situation of international peace and security

- The end of the cold war has set an auspicious environment for nuclear disarmament. Nuclear stockpiles have dropped by half over the last decade.
- Despite unilateral and bilateral efforts to reduce nuclear weapons, stockpiles of these weapons still exist, as well as the possibility of their use, whether accidental, unintentional or unauthorized.
- The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.
- In 1996, the International Court of Justice rendered a legal advisory opinion on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*.
- The 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons unanimously agreed on a number of practical steps which constitute mutually reinforcing ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament. The Disarmament Commission could build on those steps.
- In order to maintain and strengthen international peace and security, the international community needs to undertake practical steps leading to nuclear disarmament without delay and, in this regard, every effort should be made to ensure that all States are engaged in this process.

2. Interrelationship between nuclear disarmament and international peace and security:

(a) Changing political environment of the last decade. Description of changes in security doctrines and postures, including bilateral and unilateral reduction of nuclear weapons in the post-cold-war era;

(b) Present political setting and its implications for nuclear disarmament. Description of developments in the field of disarmament of weapons of mass destruction.

3. Review of achievements, current developments and emerging initiatives:

(a) Multilateral

- Conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
- Indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
- Joint declaration by the countries of the New Agenda Coalition
- Unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament
- Proposal in the programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons on negotiating a phased programme within a fixed period of time for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons
- Secretary-General's proposal on an international conference on eliminating nuclear dangers

- Proposal on an international conference on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation
- Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament
- Follow-up on the legal advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice
- Proposal for the establishment of a Global Missile and Missile Technologies Non-Proliferation Control System
- Missile Technology Control regime
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons (proposal)
- Consolidation of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and proposals for new nuclear-weapon-free zones
- Disarmament Commission guidelines on establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones

(b) Bilateral

- Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) process
- Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
- Cooperative threat reduction programmes
- "Trilateral initiative" between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

(c) Unilateral

- Measures taken by China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to reduce their nuclear arsenals
- Moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions
- Moratorium on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes

4. Existing mechanisms dealing with nuclear disarmament:

(a) Within the United Nations system

- First Committee
- Disarmament Commission
- Conference on Disarmament
- Department for Disarmament Affairs
- United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament

(b) Outside the United Nations system

- START process
- Nuclear-weapon-free zones

- IAEA
- Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

5. Ways and means to achieve nuclear disarmament:

(a) Conceptual approaches

- Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
- Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament
- New Agenda Coalition
- General Assembly resolutions related to nuclear disarmament

(b) Practical steps

- Entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
- Moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions pending the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
- Negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes in the Conference on Disarmament
- Establishment of a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament
- Application of the principle of irreversibility to nuclear disarmament
- An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament
- Early entry into force of START II and conclusion of START III, while preserving and strengthening the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
- Completion and implementation of the trilateral initiative between the Russian Federation, the United States of America and IAEA
- Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon States in unilateral reduction of their nuclear arsenals
- Increased transparency by nuclear-weapon States of their nuclear weapons capabilities
- Further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons (tactical nuclear weapons)
- Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems (de-alerting)
- A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies
- Engagement of all the nuclear-weapon States in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons
- Arrangements by all nuclear-weapon States to place fissile material no longer required for military purposes under IAEA or other relevant international verification

- Further development of verification capabilities which will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements
- Reducing the risk of unauthorized, accidental or unintentional use of nuclear weapons
- Conclusion of the model additional protocol with IAEA
- Establishment of an ad hoc committee on security assurances in the Conference on Disarmament
- Establishment of an ad hoc group on prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament
- Consolidation of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and establishment of new such zones
- Bilateral and unilateral measures
- Review of strategic postures and doctrines (no first-use of nuclear weapons)
- Commitment by the nuclear-weapon States not to deploy their nuclear weapons outside their national territories

6. Conclusions and recommendations

This section will be discussed and finalized at the following two-year sessions of Working Group I.

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